THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (d) National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) in its document National Curriculum Framework for School Education—2000 has proposed that Information Technology is to be used for effective instruction of the related subject at the school level, wherever possible. However, computer education, like all other areas of education, being a concurrent subject, its implementation is the responsibility of States / UTs. Government has not prescribed any pattern to introduce Computer Education. Schools are free to introduce Computer Education as an optional subject upto secondary level and offer it as an elective subject at senior secondary level. Many States / UTs have introduced computer education at various levels in Government schools. The Government has also a proposal for introducing a scheme of computer education in schools to support and partner with the State Governments/UTs and strengthen the computer training of students in Government schools. Appointment of teachers is however, the responsibility of State Governments/UTs.

National Resource Centre for Women

684. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to establish National Resource Centre for Women;

(b) if so, the programmes that are going to be undertaken by the proposed centre; and

(c) the budget allocated for the new centre for 2001-2002?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b)The proposal is yet to be finalized.

(c) An allocation of Rs. 2.00 crore has been earmarked for this purpose.

Abolition of formal exams upto Class X

685. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to remove formal examination upto class X;

(b) if so, the reasons for such abolition and whether the States have been consulted in this regard;

(c) if so, what is the reaction of States;

(d) whether any alternative system is going to be proposed by the Ministry in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (e) The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examination (CISCE), the two All India Boards, conduct Public Examination at class X and Class XII level. In the open schooling system, the National Open School examines and certifies the students registered with it, upto Senior Secondary Level. At present, there is no proposal under consideration of the Government to abolish these examination conducted by the CBSE, CISCE & the NOS. However, the National Curriculum Framework for School Education brought out by the NCERT in November, 2000 has recommended reduction of predominance of external examinations and removal of the 'Pass' and 'Fail' categories upto class X.

Opposition of introduction of Astrology at University Level

686. DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the UGC decided to introduce astrology as a subject for study in colleges and universities in India;

(b) the justification for this decision;

(c) the additional yearly allocation made by UGC for this purpose;

(d) whether Government are aware of the opposition by a significant section of scientific community to this decision of the UGC; and

(e) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (c) The University Grants Commission (UGC) has recently decided to introduce a number of Vocational, Innovative and General